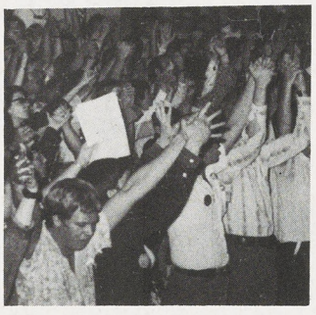
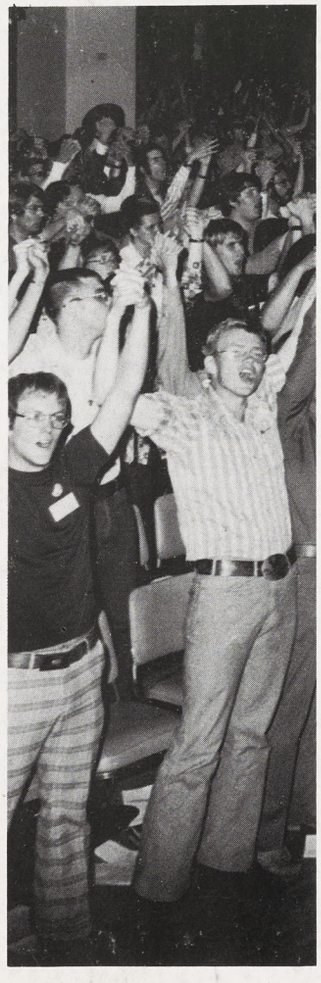
IN UNITY

News Magazine of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches

in the spirit of ecumenism





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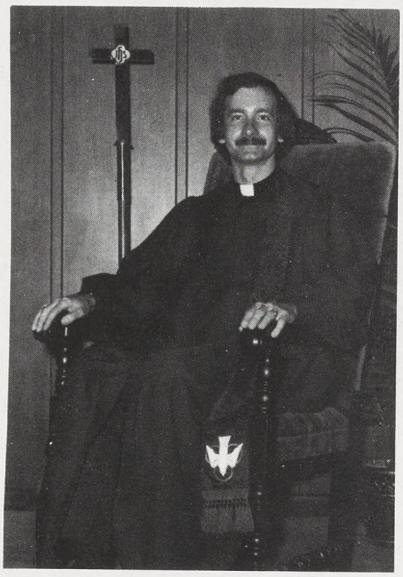

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH:

EMERGING CHRISTIANS

elder john w. gill

As gay men and women coming "out of the closet," we are beginning to realize that we have been "hung up" in more than sexual closets. In Metropolitan Community Church, an ecumenical Christian fellowship, we are constantly aware of the spiritual closets that have sometimes all but suffocated our personal Christian relationship with Christ. Emotionally, "closet" liberation produces a desire on the part of gay folk to reject stereotypical role assignment and the all too frequent use of inaccurate and misleading labels.

The time has now arrived, however, to do more than simply acknowledge the fact that we are now involved in a *three-fold* process of physical, spiritual, and emotional "closet" burning. We must now be willing to step out of all three shells, not just one. The layering of the confining barriers differs from individual to individual. Often the physical, spiritual, and emotional overlap, and sometimes they vary in thickness and resistance to pressure. The fact that these closets differ in each of us is not important. The crux of the matter is found in the fact already stated — there are three areas which one must deal with.

Many make the false assumption that one good swift kick opens all three doors at one time. I have counseled with people who feel the joy of partial freedom but are also experiencing the frustration that somehow everything is not yet complete. That irritating realization on their part often proves to be the key motivating force for further growth. Just as often, however, fear sets in, and doing a good head job on themselves people rationalize away their need for the "complete self" and convince themselves that "something is better than nothing." Not true! Although "something" is not worse than "nothing," "something" is just as "nowhere" as "nothing."

For those brave souls (including their minds and hearts) who venture forward, there is pain, confusion, and hard work aplenty. Thousands of years of societal, spiritual, emotional, and physical conditioning does not give way easily or overnight. Yet paraphrasing Norman Pittenger, "becoming" is "where it's at."

Outside of our triple closet is a new and exciting self and an opportunity for each and every one of us to be as God created us to be. There is also present, however, the very real danger and temptation to create for ourselves a different yet just as confining system of closets. Very carefully we can bring with us on our journey some of the traditional hang-ups from our old closets, and at the first opportunity we construct attractive new storage compartments to house them. It is called quasi-liberation.

If this article were to appear in a political publication, it would probably be labeled as an argument favoring anarchy. Since *IN UNITY* is an ecclesiastical magazine the term some will use to describe my sharing is "heretical." I do not consider myself to be a heretic—I rather choose to view my calling as that of a revolutionary. For those who are threatened by this statement, I would remind them that Christ's ministry was one of revolution, not in the destructive sense but in the positive, refining, liberating sense of the term.

As Christ came to fulfill and complete the law and reestablish between God and all of God's children, so it is the calling of this Fellowship to expand the ministry of the institutional church and enable all to build an *individual* relationship with Christ. This process entails moving from a closeted institutional Christian faith into a liberating personal Christian faith. Our Fellowship must never become so confining as to evolve into a closet organization and thereby lose the chance to be a living fellowship of Christian believers, living a liberated life in Christ and enabling others to do so.

God has given us the opportunity, the resources are available, the time is right. The only thing that prevents our dream and vision from becoming reality is ourselves — confined in physical, emotional, and spiritual closets. Metropolitan Community Church is the church of emerging Christians!

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Printing: Cost Plus

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Inside In Unity

Rev. Richard R. Mickley

IN UNITY will be as varied in its contents as its contributors make it. All its readers are invited to be its contributors.

As a denominational magazine, IN UNITY is uniquely a "work of the people." The news made by the people, the news sent by the people, is the news which will find its way to the pages of IN UNITY.

In this issue of IN UNITY we are happy to be able to share with our worldwide readers news of the Integrity and Dignity Conventions, information about the gay caucuses of some of the major denominations and some articles of general ecumenical interest.

We can only be favorably imprss-ed as we look at the objectives, principles, and works of these Christian groups. It could even be an occasion for us to reflect upon the steadfastness of our dedication and commitment to the Lord Jesus and to making God's love known tc all people.

As we become increasingly aware of the need to walk (work and win) in unity with our sisters and brothers every where, it is good to know that we are not struggling alone to assure all God's people that God's love is for *all* God's people, that God is *for* us, and that all God's people includes *us*.

Our mission calls us to be butterflies — on the move, spreading the good news far and wide in collaboration, in cooperation, in mutual love — with the other beautiful butterflies that are coming out of their cacoons to be messengers of the truth with us.

We cannot stay in our cacoons. We must fly together "so that all may be one, so that the world may believe. So that we can pray with Christ, "I have made your love known to them and will continue to make it known, so that the love with which you loved may be in them."

...Also in this issue..., IN UNITY features Christ Church, Miami, Florida as our first "Congregation of the Month." An invitation has been extended to each congregation to share with their sisters and brothers around the world what God is doing in their midst. We pray that our congregations are letting God work so effectively that we will have a problem finding space to share it all.

IN UNITY The News Magazine of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches

Volume V, Number 4 November 15, 1975

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INTEGRITY

SELF-ACCEPTANCE THEME OF INTEGRITY MEETING

by Worley and Margaret Rodehaver

(From left to right) Dan Fee, co-vice-president; Ellen Barrett, co-president; Ernest Clay, co-founder and trustee; Louie Crew, co-founder and FORUM editor; and Jim Wickliff, co-president.

Lack of self-acceptance is the most difficult of all problems homosexuals face, according to three speakers who addressed the first national meeting of Integrity August 8-10.

Integrity, organized in 1974, lists chapters in seven major U.S. cities, and is an organization for Episcopal homosexuals and others interested in understanding the homosexual lifestyle(s).

Registered for the three-day convention were approximately 150 persons from across the country, clergy and laity, male and female, both homosexual and heterosexual.

Keynote speaker, the Rev. Dr. W. Norman Pittenger, Anglican theologian from Cambridge University, England, while stating flatly that lack of self-acceptance is the homosexual's most difficult problem, based much of his address on God's love for all of humankind and humankind's need to love God and one another.

The Rev. Robert Herrick, preacher during a special Integrity Mass on the second morning of the convention at the Cathedral Church of St. James, proclaimed the Chicago meeting as a "great moment" for the Episcopal homosexual, a moment of birth and a moment of death...a moment when self-affectation must die.

Dr. Louie Crew, founder of Integrity, went about commenting on the subject of self-acceptance from a second point of view.

Speaking during a "Founder's Banquet" the second evening of the convention, he said, I assess our most urgent need as Gay (homosexual) people to be the need to love one another. Unquestionably we will require the Grace of God, but until we shed our own homophobia learned in the 'parlors of Pharoah' and welcome instead rich Gay catholicity, Gay diversity, I see Gay people 'trapped in Egypt' forever."

Those individuals gathered in Chicago were more interested in learning to relate to one another in an open Christian atmosphere than in denouncing those whom they indicated have forced them for so long to meet in less than Christian surroundings.

Dr. Pittenger addressed an open meeting the second day of the convention, a four-hour session attended by more than 200 persons.

He stressed that any discussion of homosexuality, or for that matter, heterosexuality, must be based on an open understanding of human sexuality.

Urging homosexuals to "love one another" he warned against shallow relationships, relationships in which one person uses another.

Dr. Pittenger and Dr. Crew both received Integrity's first annual award for "outstanding contributions to Christian understanding of human sexuality."

The Rt. Rev. Quintin E. Primo, suffragan bishop of Chicago, was primary celebrant during the concelebrated Eucharist on Saturday morning. Some 15 clergy attending the convention concelebrated with the bishop.

A number of workshops were conducted during the three days covering such topics as "Problems in Counseling for Gays," "Gay Community-Cultural Involvement and Responsibility," and "Concepts in Moral Theology."

During a business meeting which wrapped up the convention, the group decided to hold a convention next year, but did not decide on its location. The Education Committee suggested ways of informing both Gays and heterosexuals about the Christian Gay community.

Members of Dignity, the Roman Catholic homosexual organization, and other denominational groups were thanked for their assistance and participation.

Integrity plans to have either transcripts or tapes of Dr. Pittenger's talk available to the general public in the near future.

Dr. Pittenger was preacher for the regular 11 a.m. Mass at the Cathedral Church of St. James on Sunday, August 10, and was also celebrant for a 9:30 a.m. Eucharist.

He spoke Sunday evening to the congregation of the Metropolitan Community Church of Chicago, a primarily homosexual denomination.

(Mr. Rodehaver is communications officer of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Southern Ohio and editor of the diocese's publication, INTERCHANGE. Mrs. Rodehaver is a contributing editor for the publication.)

Integrity in the Episcopal Church

by Dick Sheppard

(*This article was written especially for* IN UNITY *by Dick Sheppard, the convenor of Los Angeles Integrity and author of* Elizabeth: The Life and Career of Elizabeth Taylor. *Double day, hardcover; Warner, paperback.*)

In August, 1975 an idea became reality in Chicago at a 3-day founding convention held at St. James Cathedral. The desired result was for the delegates to return to various parts of the U.S.A. and initiate dialogue at the diocesan level between the visible structure of the Episcopal Church and its gay members.

To that end Los Angeles *Integrity* is now organized and is constitutionally committed to inform the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Los Angeles, and the public at large, about the subject of homosexuality and Gay identity in a responsible and comprehensive manner.

The Universal Fellowship of MCC and our Roman brethren in DIGNITY today stand as a powerful witness and rebuke to the traditional homophobia of the institutional Church. The situation in the Anglican Communion is at once easier and more difficult. Easier because it was the Wolfenden Report in the 1950's in Britain which made consenting adult sex there no longer a matter of public morality and penalty. In the very forefront of that successful fight were the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, and the Moral Welfare Council of the Church of England. In 1958 the Encyclical of the Lambeth Conference (of all Bishops of the Anglican Communion worldwide) contained a statement about family life with milestone implications.

THE REV. DR. W. NORMAN PITTENGER

Addressing national convention of Integrity

"We believe that the procreation of children is not the sole purpose of Christian marriage," it stated. "The Biblical revelation does not limit the function of sexuality and the family to the reproductive purpose." Furthermore: "Neither the Bible nor human experience supports such a view. Where it has been held, the reason generally lay in the fear of the misuse of sexual relationship or in a false sense that there is, in any sexual relationship, an intrinsic evil. Neither fear, nor a false sense of what is 'evil' is a helpful guide for humanity, in this or any other matter."

At last, one of the major communions in Christendom had dared to challenge the old Jewish concept (inherited by Christians) of procreation as the be-all and end-all of sexuality, a dehumanizing concept which reduces people to the levels of so many pairs of animals rutting in the barnyard, and takes no account of the uniquely human propensity, given of God, for mutual mental and spiritual interrelationship apart from the purely physical. Granted that the good Bishops at Lambeth were talking about marriage in a heterosexual context, once the door is open to expressions of sexuality which go beyond mere baby-making, the way is clear to seriously examine the validity of a variety of forms of sexual expression which can be as rich and meaningful as their source, which is Love Himself.

So the Gay Anglican's position is made easier by the willingness of the Church leadership to explore and re-examine (however slowly) entrenched beliefs and practices. This openness extends to local levels, where one U.S. bishop reportedly asks 3 questions of admittedly-gay candidates for priesthood: Are you effeminate? Are you promiscuous? Are you predatory? If the answers are all in the negative, then homosexuality *per se* is not seen as a bar to ordination. I realize that these questions, and particularly the first, are enough to send some people in Gay Lib right up a wall. I beg them to remember, however, that what we are talking about here is not the Elks nor the A.F.L.-C.I.O. but a portion of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church here on earth. Standing on Christ's promise, the Church (in some form) expects to be here when all around it has crumbled into dust, and for that reason, bandwagon-jumping is simply not in style. Progress, however slow, is still progress.

Running counter to these encouraging signs is a vise of fear which effectively prevents most of the clergy from making any public moves, and a complacent smugness among much of even the enlightened laity which can be called the Old South "plantation" mentality, as in: "Our darkies just *luv* us." That's what *they* think. The deal seems to be: Do what you do and be what you are but please don't mention it, that is, don't force me into any kind of honest encounter with the truth of your reality.

But even that is a step up from the 1950's, when the official position was widely-circulated in an odious little tract pamphlet called "Letter to a Homosexual." This gem is probably still polluting the atmosphere in rustic missions in Alaska, South Dakota or wherever. It proclaimed the good news that being homosexual is perfectly swell but be careful to do absolutely nothing about it. The only solution was celibacy—a rare, God-given vocation which for the vast majority of humankind is simply an invitation to slow sexual suicide.

The cruel dilemna facing Gays with a vocation to the Episcopal priesthood, in which the honest are rejected and the perjurers ordained, is an abomination which cries to Heaven. St. Paul's ringing proclamation—"By the Grace of God, I am what I am"—is thus perverted into "By the grace of man, I am what I am not." This must end. "For nothing is hid that shall not be made manifest," Our Lord tells us in Luke 8:17, "nor anything secret that shall not be known and come to light." *Integrity* is praying earnestly that such revelation can be done in the spirit of Love and *within* the House.

In keeping with our brothers and sisters across the spectrum of the entire gay community, *Integrity* is arming to confront the twin evils of oppression from without and the grievous lack of self-acceptance from within ("no femmes, fats, forties," *et al.*). Our founder Louie Crew addresses this latter concern

Continued on Pg. 24

THE CAUCUSES

PRESBYTERIAN GAY CAUCUS

The Presbyterian Gay Caucus is an organization of Presbyterian women and men, some ordained, some lay, "who believe that our church must be confronted with the injustice it perpetrates against persons on the basis of affectional or sexual preference. Our goal is to work for change within the denomination..."

The last General Assembly in May after two hours of intense debate voted *not* to recognize the P.G.C. as an unofficial organization of Presbyterians related to the church under the article of the church's constitution pertaining to "special work of missionary or other benevolence purposes, or for the purpose of instruction in religion and development in Christian nurture."

Rev. David Sindt of Chicago, an ordained minister, is national coordinator of the caucus. Mr. Sindt has recently been granted permission by the Presbytery of Chicago ("unexpectedly", as the P.G.C. Newsletter puts it) to serve the gay community in Chicago as a recognized ordained minister.

This action is believed to be the first within the UPCUSA to support the work of an openly gay ordained minister.Although Mr. Sindt is presently the only publicly acknowledged gay U.P. minister in the country, a number of Presbyterys across the country are at various stages of considering the ordination of candidates who are affirmedly gay.

Caucus leaders, though denied "unofficial" recognition, considered the caucus well recognized. "First, in the simple fact that our report was considered. Then it was published in the official working papers. Besides, we were recognized in the prominent position we and our report occupied in every official and unofficial report and description of the actions of the General Assembly. And the Gay Caucus was included in the coalition of "special ministry groups." Mr. Sindt stated he felt the caucus would not only be permitted to submit reports to future General Assemblies, but in fact would be required to do so under the UPCUSA constitution.

The five purposes of the P.G.C. are:

1. To explore, study, and appreciate the values of our gay heritage and develop new ministries between the church and the gay community;
2. To encourage and aid the development and distribution of Biblical and theological resources on homosexuality and alternate life styles;
3. To work within our judicatories for a heightened consciousness of gay people and their concerns and insights;
4. To facilitate the intelligent consideration by judicatories of support for legislation prohibiting discrimination on the basis of affectional or sexual preference and for legislation deleting restrictions on private sexual behavior of consenting adults;
5. To cooperate ecumenically with gay caucuses of other denominations and with interdenominational organizations addressing themselves to issues of relations between gay people and the church.

UNITED METHODIST GAY CAUCUS

Members of the United Methodist Gay Caucus met in late July in Evanston, Illinois to draft a statement of purpose, elect leaders, and set up task forces to work in several areas.

Organizers include clergy, seminarians, and lay persons.

Caucus members will try to sensitize denominational boards to the issues that concern and affect gay persons.

They also intend to be a presence at the 1976 United Methodist General Conference where the issue of ordination of self-proclaimed gay persons will be the cause of a major floor battle. Present indications from state and district conferences indicate that the ordination of homosexuals will not be approved by the General Conference.

The United Methodist Council on Youth Ministry has taken a strong stand that "a particular sexual orientation" not be included in criteria for ordination or for membership or for fellowship. The Council will have a forum on sexual orientation at its December-January meeting, following upon an intensive seminar on sexuality. Information: U.M Youth Ministries, Box 840, Nashville, TN 37202.

The Commission on the Status and Role of Women heard presentations from lesbian women at its September meeting. They spoke as part of an examination of alternative life styles. Both criticized the Christian Church generally and United Methodism specifically for failure to include homosexuals in full membership.

PHILADELPHIA YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS COMMITTEE ON HOMOSEXUALITY

by Pamala Hitchcock

The Committee on Homosexuality of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends was founded in 1972, as a subcommittee of the Meeting for Social Concerns. Now a regular standing committee of the Yearly Meeting, it has two basic aims: to make the Yearly Meeting sensitive to the needs of its gay members, and to cooperate with and help the gay community at large.

The work done by the Committee within the Society of Friends has included visits to individual Meetings, visits to Friends' schools, making literature on homosexuality available to Friends, and dialogue with the Family Relations Committee. As part of its outreach efforts, the Committee helped arrange in 1973 for the use of a Quaker-owned building by the Eromin Center, a gay counseling center. Eromin has since moved, but the building continues to be used by the Gay Coffeehouse and the Lesbian Coffeehouse. More recently, the Committee has succeeded in securing a $2000 grant for Eromin.

Gay civil rights laws are an important area of concern for us. We sent representatives to testify on Philadelphia's Bill 1275, and we intend to send someone to testify on H.R. 166, the Federal bill, when the House holds hearings on it. In addition, we have obtained financial aid for Harry Langhorne, a local gay activist, in having materials on the state gay rights bill printed.

Reorganization within the Yearly Meeting has from time to time threatened the existence and/or autonomy of the Committee, but we have managed to hold our own. Although reaction to our activities has varied a great deal, the Quaker belief that there is that of God in every person (and, therefore, in every gay person) has held us in good stead.

The new clerk of the Committee is Willing Madeira. Previously, Larry Scott Butler served faithfully as clerk for three years. The Committee may be contacted through Pamela Hitchcock, Staff Liaison Person, 1515 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102 (215)241-7235.

The following "Minute on Homosexuality" was adopted by the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in 1973.

We should all be aware that there is a great diversity in the relationships that people develop with one another. Although we neither approve nor disapprove of homosexuality, the same standards under the law which are applied to heterosexual activities should also be applied to homosexual activities.

Since persons who engage in homosexual activities suffer serious discrimination in employment, housing, and the right to worship, we believe that civil rights laws should protect them. In particular we advocate the revision of all legislation imposing disabilities and penalties upon homosexual activities.

LUTHERANS CONCERNED

Lutherans Concerned for Gay People is a group of gay and non-gay people who are working to bring change within the Lutheran Church in behalf of a Gospel of love, understanding, and reconciliation for all women and men, regardless of their affectional preference.

The organization was founded in Minneapolis in June of 1974 and has members within each of the Lutheran Synods: LCA; ALC, Missouri.

Their stated goals include:

1. We seek to unite gay Lutherans and their supporters for mutual assistance, support and communication.

2. We seek to join with other groups, religious and secular, to pursue common goals.

3. We seek to persuade our church to face honestly and directly the questions and needs of gay people, both those within the church and those who have left it, in light of the church's failure to understand them.

4. We seek to work with the church in proclaiming the Christian gospel of joy and love to all women and men.

The organization addressed an open letter to the Lutheran Church:

"As gay Lutherans we affirm with joy the goodness of human sexuality which God has given us.

We are to be found in the pulpits and pews, the schools and offices of Lutheran churches and organizations throughout the land. We have received the sacraments, listened to the preaching of God's Word, taught in the schools and worked in the committees and organizations of Lutheran churches.

Some of us have rejoiced to find through the ministry of Lutheran churches that we are included among those whom Jesus Christ has redeemed.

But many of us have found that our church has misled, misunderstood, confused, alienated and unjustly condemned us, so that we have sometimes been driven to espair and robbed of the peace and joy which the Gospel of Jesus Christ brings to all people.

We call upon our church to further a greater understanding of human sexuality in all its manifestations. We ask our church to seek to remove discrimination against gay women and men wherever it exists.

We ask our church to receive and welcome us as it receives and welcomes others."

And to Gay People it says:

"To our gay sisters and brothers, *we affirm that the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is for all of us, too. We call upon you to explore that gospel message and to receive it, for we believe that it can free us from the bondage of a misunderstanding of self, and empower us to express true Christian love in our relationships with others."*

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AN ECUMENICAL OVERVIEW

roy birchard

Frequently I am asked, "When are we going to join the National Council of Churches?" The General Conference of 1972 voted to begin exploration of that possibility. As a result, one day that autumn I found myself sitting in the New York office of the Rev. Donald F. Landwehr, then associate general secretary of the National Council of Churches. "You need fifty churches and/or twenty thousand members," he told me. That was three years ago. Today there are 43 chartered churches in UFMCC, but the full, registered membership is sufficiently less than the goal of 20,000 that while we have the "or" of Mr. Landwehr's equation, we do not have the "and." In general, if it seemed the National Council was waiting for us with open arms, we could say, Sure, go ahead and apply when we get fifty churches. But there will be a fight, I think. So let's wait until they cannot stymie us on numbers alone.

Should we entertain this as a goal? Yes, I think so. The symbolic value of our entry into the National Council—both to gay people and to the Christian community—is equally as important as passage of a Federal gay rights statute by the U.S. Congress. I also think though that in the United States we should belong to the National Association of Evangelicals, Church Women United, A Christian Ministry in the National Parks, and the Pentecostal Fellowship of North America. And in other countries, MCC's should seek to participate in analogous organizations. Where there are viable councils to make it worth the effort, our congregations should be active participants in local, state and regional councils of churches.

What do we gain by fellowshipping with other Christians? Haven't many of them done their best to give us a bad time? The Bible tells us we are commanded to love one another—and the command has special weight in our obligation not just to love those we are comfortable with. We know this from within our congregational life, but it works in the wider Christian community too. What *is* ecumenism anyway? the words "ecumenism" and "ecumenical" come from the Greek word *ecumenikos*, the whole inhabited world. As Christians, we are commanded to evangelize the *ecumenikos*, so ecumenism and evangelism have always been closely associated. Foreign missionaries in the 19th century quickly learned the differences between Baptists and Presbyterians in India were irrelevant to new, Indian Christians. Institutional differences were hindrances to evangelism. Why should evangelists compete, or Christians seek to reconvert those already converted? Thus out of practical experience, the ecumenical movement was born.

This continues to work even today. Often we fear that other Christians are against us. But that is only partly true. Recently a former exhorter of MCC New York who has moved to the South wrote back that she had been approached by the pastor of the leading Baptist church in her city, begging her to start an MCC. "Gay people here are climbing up the walls," he said. He even offered worship and meeting space. Here is help for our work coming to us from another Christian. The story can be multiplied hundreds of times over in the history of the rise of MCC. Then too, one thinks of the value of Dr. Norman Pittenger's appearance at our last General Conference. Not everyone in those other churches has to listen to *us* talk about gay people. Some of them know things about our work that we need to hear.

Recently I read a book by Carol V. R. George entitled *Segregated Sabbaths*, a biography of the Rev. Richard Allen, founder and first bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Richard Allen was the Troy Perry of black Americans in 1820. As a young preacher, he and the people he evangelized from his community were forced to worship in the balcony at the back of St. George's Methodist Church in Philadelphia. One day, at service, Richard Allen made the mistake of praying in the wrong part of the church. He was physically thrown out during service, and the black people followed him. There, at the beginning of the 19th century, a group of Christians not unlike us had to face building up a "separatist" church to serve their community. The trials and tribulations they faced were in many ways like the ones we face today. By reading about Christians who have been places before us, maybe we can avoid problems in our work before they arise and gain hope by knowing that God has always helped the oppressed when they cried out in prayer.

What about those who stay? Richard Allen founded a wholly new denomination. But Joan Gloucester, a black minister in the same city at the same time, founded the First African Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia. And black people in other churches continued worshipping in predominantly-white churches with white ministers. One sees this continuing even today. In any identifiable community—whether ethnic, linguistic, or "lifestyle"—there will be some Christians who prefer to worship in an "integrated" setting, and some who prefer to worship with their own. We found this in MCC New York when MCC Hispana began regular Sunday services. Some Spanish-speaking people preferred focusing their energies in a mission effort to their own gay, Spanish-speaking community, and some bilingual Spanish-background people stayed with the English-speaking church. In church life, one must be sensitive to the needs of others. Some may feel they can grow better in the challenge of multiplicity. Others feel called to bring the Gospel to their own. We must not lament if somebody got a different message from God than the one we got.

MCC is the largest Christian organization in the world serving the gay community. Even as we have grown, caucuses and worshipping organizations of gay people have also sprung up within the previously-existing churches. Not every Christian has the same church experience either. Churches have been surprisingly varied. Few churches feel comfortable talking about people's sexual identity. But some congregations and ministers—all too few, but some—have been more understanding of gay people than others. While many of us have been hurt by the bigoted, others have been supported and sustained by churches that may not have *understood* the gay experience, but loved the gay person as best they could. Gay Christians who have remained in these other churches are the ones best able to be advocated for our community among them.

Why do we need advocates? Because, as we have seen in gay rights law reform movements in California and other states, for civil rights laws to pass, the mainline churches and synagogues must allow it. We may wonder why they should have this power over us, and we may resent their having it when they know us only as stereotypes. But the hard fact is they do. The Archdioces of New York and the Orthodox rabbis have killed the civil rights bill in New York's city council year after year. That is why Dignity chapters and gay synagogues are so vital. They are the ones who know where to go and who to persuade so as to defang uninformed bigotry. Often, while MCCers can afford to be more militant in articulating our community's needs, other gay Christians—because they are personally known and trusted—can bring

the lessons home to those who do not know us. And MCC has a good record in supporting our mainline brothers and sisters who are often few in number, isolated and subjected to abuse. We who have a large, loving and supportive community need to lend some love to our foot soldiers in these other camps.

Sometimes in the past, as I have worked as an MCC minister with friends in these other groups, I have thought of this division of labor as being like the difference in the 19th century between overseas and home mission boards. MCC is the board of home missions. We are called to evangelize our community and bring the healing power of the Gospel to bear on our confused, lonely and hurting gay sisters and brothers. The gay caucuses are like overseas missionaries. They represent our community's interests in places where often they are few in number and strongly tested by the challenges they face. We are the left hand and they the right. Both must work together if we are to do God's work.

Why *are* there so many churches, particularly in the United States? Historically the reason is simple. The United States was settled by Europeans who brought their home versions of Christianity with them. Thus even today, particular denominations are strong where traditional ethnic communities continue. In Wisconsin and Minnesota there are many Lutherans and many German - and Scandinavian - descended people. In New England there are many Catholics and Congregationalists. The South and Middle West were shaped by the revivals of the Great Awakening which followed the westward migration of pioneers. While several denominations owe their roots to the Great Awakening, the principal reapers were Baptist and Methodist preachers — and indeed these two denominations are numerous and strong in these regions.

In the 20th century, the waves of European immigration ceased, but as we all know, we continue to be a mobile people. As we move from city to city, as we listen to the same radio programs, and watch the same television, regionalism and ethnic identity (at least among whites) tend to melt and run together. When many Americans move from one town to another, they may join a church because it is located near their residence—not because they are particular adherents to Methodist or Reformed Church belief. If they grow rich, they may join an Episcopal or Presbyterian church catering to the upper middle class. All this mixing up tends to cause people to wonder why all these different churches continue. Despite these trends, the traditional Protestant and Orthodox denominations do continue—and continue to be separated from Roman Catholicism. It seems that here on earth, the unity of the Christian Church is mystical, not institutional. Powerful egos on the part of established church leaders, fears of unknown experiences of Christianity, as well as genuine outpourings of the Spirit and genuinely-held emphases of belief, tend to reinforce the continuing separation of the churches.

I am not one who is in a big hurry to get all Christians together in one church. Those who read church history cannot but be impressed that the kind of Christian unity Western Europe knew before the Reformation was not an unmixed blessing—or there would have *been* no Reformation. In our time, the Protestant churches of Germany were unified not by Christian cooperation but by edict of Adolph Hitler who thought it would be more efficient for the carrying-out of his anti-Christian goals. Separations may be God's way of reminding us that our wills for the Church may not necessarily be the divine will.

We and our mainline gay Christian friends need to cooperate to secure the civil rights and religious dignity that our community deserves. The National Task Force on Gay People in the Church *was* able to cooperate in convincing the National Council of Churches to endorse gay civil rights. Where the Spirit reveals a task for Christians to do, cooperation *can* be achieved. Beyond that, let us let the Spirit direct us. We know we have a mission. Let us try to be faithful to that mission. When we need more revelations, God will give them to us.

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TASK FORCE PRODUCES SIGNIFICANT BIBLIOGRAPHY

The American Library Association Task Force on Gay Liberation (Social Responsibilities Round Table) was launched in 1970 as the first openly gay subgroup in a professional association.

Under the leadership of Barbara Gittings, Coordinator, they have produced a comprehensive and significant Bibliography of gay writings. And we felt it highly worthwhile to mention in this special ecumenical issue.

Many other such groups now exist, including the Gay Caucus of the American Psychiatric Association, the Gay Nurses Alliance, the Association of Gay Psychologists, the Gay Caucus for the Modern Languages, the Gay Caucus of the American Public Health Association.

The ALA Task Force, says Ms. Gittings, "works to promote creation, publication, and dissemination of more and better materials on gay people and the gay movement, and to raise within the library profession issues of discrimination against gay people as librarians and as library users."

In the summer of 1975, the Task Force issued its first Gay Guidelines—"Guidelines for Treatment of Gay Themes in Children's and Young Adult Literature," which was intended primarily for authors and publishers of books for younger readers.

The ALA Task Force Gay Bibliography can be obtained from Barbara Gittings, Coordinator, ALA Task Force of Gay Liberation, Box 2383, Philadelphia, Pa. 19103. (Single copies$.25, 5 for$1.00, 6-30 for$.15 each, and 31 and more for $.12 each).

FELLOWSHIP IN TRANSITION

DON PEDERSON ORDAINED IN L.A.

A joyous service of ordination took place in the sanctuary of MCC-LA on Sunday, September 14th, as The Rev. Donald Pederson took on the lifetime commitment of professional ministry. Paulette Heron (for the laity) and The Rev. Larry Bernier (for the Credentials Committee) presented Rev. Pederson to the Elders as a candidate for ordination, while Rev. Elder Richard Vincent officiated as the examiner. Throughout the touching service, a sense of deep reverence pervaded.

A high point of the ordination was the MCC-LA choir's rendition of a special ordination hymn, written by Rev. Bernier. As Rev. Pederson knelt before the Elders and other ministers assembled before the altar, after the traditional "laying on of hands," a new stole of white raw silk was blessed and laid upon his shoulders. A Bible was then presented to him by Deacon Larry Long.

A resounding standing ovation climaxed the service as Rev. Elder James Sandmire presented Donald to the congregation as a fully ordained servant of the Lord.

Rev. Pederson is District Coordinator of the seventeen churches, missions and study groups of the Southwest District Conference. He is also Dean of Samaritan Bible School, as well as an instructor in the school.

BIBLE SCHOOL CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

For the first time, Samaritan Bible School will be offering a correspondence course to provide for the educational needs of Fellowship members both near and far. The first course, entitled, "The Life and Teaching of Jesus," will be a ten-lesson study supplemented by the text of the same name by Edward W. Bauman. It will deal primarily with the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke).

Rev. Jeffrey Pulling, Registrar of the seminary, believes "it's an excellent course, highly recommended for clergy, exhorters, deacons, and interested laypeople."

The total cost of the course is $40.00 per student, and installment payments can be arranged. Further information can be obtained from Rev. Pulling at 1050 South Hill, L.A., Cal. 90015.

REPORT FROM SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Pastor Stan Harris of M.C.C. South Australia reported to *IN UNITY* of the work that he and members of his congregation had undertaken to inform the Legislative Council of the religious aspects of minority rights.

On September 17, 1975, the vote was taken in the Parliament House of South Australia.

Pastor Harris was present as the "words of liberation" were read. As the vote was announced, "The ayes have it," an audible "Hallelujah!" issued from Pastor Harris' section of the gallery.

The next day the headlines red: *"HOMOSEXUALITY LEGALIZED!"*

The article said "South Australia yesterday became the first Australian state to legalize homosexuality between consenting adult males. The Bill passed in the Legislative Council provides for a code of sexual behavior to apply to society generally, regardless of sex or sexuality."

Pastor Harris reported that "many responsible people had been working for this, supported by clergy and professional people. Homosexuals were distressed that many people seemed to think of homosexuality in terms of sodomy or buggery. It is hoped to educate the public about this form of love, and secure a community acceptance of homosexual people."

LONDON AND BIRMINGHAM HOLD UK MCC MEETING

On July 26th, we had the first meeting of our national ministry in Birmingham. We had a sharing of experiences and dreams for our future. We also shared our frustrations.

The whole group toured the Coventry Cathedral and had lunch there. It was a beautiful day and a pleasant and spiritually uplifting get-together.

The following day, we celebrated the first anniversary of the Birmingham Study Group. The congregation had begun the celebration early with a party the night before to which the ministry had been invited. The service was a blessing. Mr. Jo McVay Abbot and Ms. Angelea Needham co-celebrated and Rev. Tom Bigelow preached.

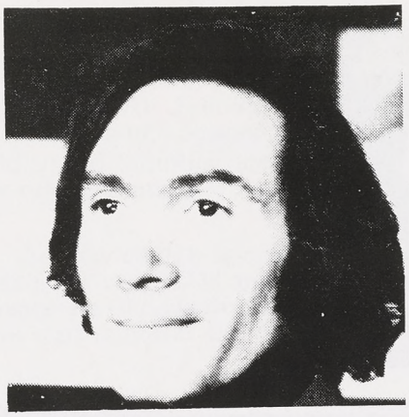
In August the largest homosexual organization in the land, the Campaign for Homosexual Equality, gathered for a three day weekend in Sheffield. Over 1,000 delegates came from all over the United Kingdom. MCC-UK was there too, represented by Rev. Bigelow and Ms. Needham along with a dozen lay persons.

Ms. Needham is a member of the executive committee of the CHE. We were active in the conference, worked in the religion workshop, demonstrated for the rights of Christians in the gay rights movement, and held services for the delegates on Sunday. Our service was well attended and we met many new people who we hope will join in this work of the Lord.

Rev. Bigelow, Coordinator of Church Extension for the United Kingdom, is Pastor of MCC London. Mr. Abbott, Exhorter, is Worship Coordinator for Birmingham MCC. Ms. Needham, Exhorter, is Worship Coordinator for Bath/Bristol. Mr. Richard Voss is an Exhorter on the London MCC Staff.

MCC-UK is trying to work toward a national conciousness in its ministry. Since there is only one licensed minister in the United Kingdom, exhorters serve the local groups. It is planned to have circuits in the future.

The National Coordinator works with and supports the local ministry and congregations, is the liason person for the wide-spread groups, and is the national spokesperson for the church. (Excerpted from a letter from Rev. Bigelow, 61 Earls Court Square, London SW5 9DG, England)



Rev. Tom Bigelow

FELLOWSHIP OFFICES RELOCATE

On October 1, the general offices of the Universal Fellowship were relocated in a second floor suite on North Highland Avenue in Hollywood, California.

The move makes more space available to the Fellowship and to the Mother Church, both of whom were feeling the need for more office space.

The five room suite provides offices for Rev. Perry, Moderator, Rev. Vincent, Clerk of the Board of Elders, Frank Zerrelli, Fellowship Secretary, Rev. Mickley, Department of Publications, and the Board of Prison Ministry, as well as space for members of other boards, commissions, and task forces visiting the Fellowship offices.

The new Fellowship offices are located in the facilities of the Los Angeles Gay Community Services Center at 1213 North Highland Avenue.

SOUTHEAST DISTRICT NEWS

Metropolitan Community Church in Fort Meyers, Florida is presently looking for a new home to worship in.

The group is anxiously awaiting Rev. Hose's visit, along with the Tampa MCC Choir on September 28th. October will be a month-long period of spiritual renewal on the theme *The Dawn of Promise.*

Ft. Meyers members will join their sisters and brothers for the All-Florida MCC Day at Disney World on October 11th. (From the *Tampa MCC Crusader,* September, 1975.)

MCC JOINS ECUMENICAL MINISTRY IN CHICAGO

Good Shepherd Parish Metropolitan Community Church, Chicago, Illinois, has joined nine other congregations to form the "Northside Ecumenical Night Ministry."

The Night Ministry will hire a full-time minister who will coordinate the program of making resources available to people who are wrestling with such basic theological issues as estrangement, lack of self esteem and guilt.

Rev. Kenneth Martin, Pastor of GSPMCC, chaired the original committee to draft the proposal for the ministry, served on the committee to draft the proposal for the ministry, served on the committee to draft the job description and now serves on the Board of Directors.

The program, which will be in full operation by late Autumn of 1975, includes congregations from the following:
Metropolitan Community Church, United Church of Christ, United Methodist, Judaism, Roman Catholic, Episcopal, Presbyterian and Unitarian.

DICK WHITE GOES EAST

Rev. Richard White, member of the staff of MCC-LA and Assistant Coordinator of the Southwest District, delivered his farewell sermon to the congregation of the L.A. church on the morning of Sunday, September 21st. Rev. White based his message on a passage from Isaiah, "Death cannot praise Thee ...the living, they shall praise Thee," and challenged the congregation to seek revelation of God's will in their lives.

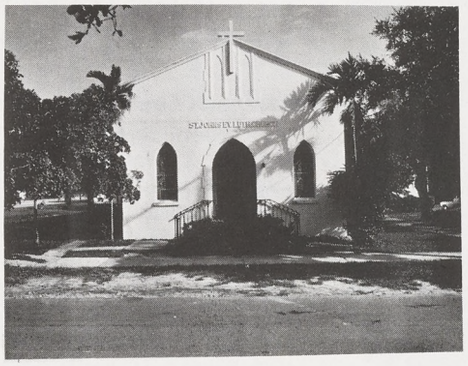
Richard and his lover, Mark, will make their home in Springfield, Massachusetts, where they have been called to work with a group to form a new MCC congregation.

MID CENTRAL DISTRICT NEWS

Rev. Charlie Arehart,
District Coordinator
Rev. Bob Arthur,
Correspondent

Rev. Elder Carol Cureton preached spiritual renewal at First Metropolitan Community Church of Nebraska at the end of Spetember. At that time, Rev. Arthur was officially

Continued on Pg. 24



MCC Miami finds new home

In October, Christ Church, MCC Miami, dedicated their new church home. IN UNITY *takes this occasion to share with its world-wide readers this work of the Lord on the southern tip of the state of Florida in the U.S.A.*

Christ Church, Metropolitan Community Church of Miami, is a growing, dynamic and vital influence in the southern Florida gay and non-gay community. Chartered in the fall of 1971, it was the second chartered church of the Universal Fellowship outside of California.

The congregation has gone through many changes over the years including varying meeting places, leadership and circumstances. Through it all, a solid core of members have kept the spirit of the vision foremost and have overcome the many problems that developed from time to time.

The congregation first met in Coconut Grove in a theater, then graduated to various church buildings and finally obtained its own building on the northwest side of Miami. This was accomplished with the sale of bonds to various individuals. These bonds were repaid in full plus interest with the sale of the building in 1973.

Having to move out of its building in the northwest area, the "church on the move" was able to rent the Grand Ballroom of the Casablanca Hotel on Miami Beach. Local churches refused to provide rental to the MCC congregation. With each move the church lost some members but also gained some. The limited activities of the church slowed down progress somewhat since it met only on Sunday mornings but the congregation continued meeting and worshiping in homes while still planning for the day it would obtain its own full time building again, as the Lord had promised.

This finally happened with the cooperation of the "Center for Dialog," a service organization in Miami whose director, The Rev. Don Olson, is also pastor of the St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church. His congregation voted approval for Christ Church, MCC of Miami, to occupy the premises. Finally papers were signed, plans made for renovation, and within a month the building was ready for dedication on Sunday, October 5, 1975. Almost 200 persons attended this service, filling the sanctuary to overflowing. The Rev. Elder John H. Hose, Vice-Moderator of the Universal Fellowship, was the guest speaker.

The church's founding pastor was The Rev. Bradley P. Wilson who is now active with "Gay Community Services of Southern Florida." Other interim and elected pastors have been The Rev. Ted Calloway and Fr. Don Hoffman, both who have served as pastors of the Fort Lauderdale church. The Rev. Frank D. Crouch, Jr. served for one year and then moved on to other areas.

The present pastor, The Rev. Keith D. Davis, was invited to visit for a week-long "spiritual renewal" and after leaving he was called by the church to be elected as their pastor. He has now served over two years and since then the church membership has grown to over 200 members; the church purchased and paid in full for a lovely church organ, and the congregation has grown spiritually with maturity. The pastor is also the Southeast District Coordinator. Rev. Keith recently received the David International Society's special award as "Humanitarian of the Year" and other honors from local organizations. He Lectures frequently at local colleges, appears on radio and television talk shows often, and is active as a full time pastor in the Fellowship.

The church is served by a dedicated Board of Deacons, with Ms. Peggy Klootwyk as Chairperson. The church provides an accredited Seminary Extension Center class under the direction of Ms. Artie Nicholls, Assistant Chairperson. Other groups include the MCC Affinity Women's Committee, with their own publication called *LOVE LINE,* and an "Alcoholics Together" program is just starting. The church has its own MCC Miami choir under the direction of Deacon Dick Dillman, Mr. Tobey D. Lytle, organist, and Mr. Glenn Chamblee, pianist. The official publication of the church is the *MCC Miami News - New Life Outreach,* and is published four times a year.

The Board of Directors work together as the governing body of the church, concerned with the welfare of all its members. Mr. Charles Pacienza is the clerk and Mr. Glenn Chamblee is the Treasurer. The board vice-chairperson is Mr. Ted Dusterdieck. Christ Church now has its beautiful sanctuary to worship and meet in or which they thank and praise the Lord! The church is solvent, paying all its bills monthly. The congregation is growing and great plans are in the

making for greater accomplishments for the Lord within the Universal Fellowship.

The new weekly schedule:

- *SUNDAY* Worship Services at 3:00 and 8:00 P.M. (The early service is liturgical and the later service is evangelical.)
- *MONDAY*-Committee Meetings.
- *TUESDAY*-Choir Rehearsal.
- *WEDNESDAY*-Bible Study. (Two classes: Seminary Training and Metropolitan Academy Class taught by the pastor.)
- *THURSDAY* Evening-The Mid-week Church Supper.

Friday and Saturday are left open for other events.

The new church telephone number is (305) 633-5733 and there is an answering service for messages if the staff is not at the church. The pastor's telephone remains (305) 758-7190 for emergencies, etc. The mailing address remains the same: P. O. Box 370963, Miami, Fla., 33137 for all mail. The address of the church is N.W. 22nd Avenue & 26th Street, Miami. The church welcomes all visitors to their services and functions and is always anxious to help other MCC members throughout the world discover the "new life" we have together in Christ Jesus, our Lord and King.

THE FOLLOWING WAS WRITTEN ON A THANK YOU CARD AND SENT TO A H.E.L.P. ATTORNEY. BOTH WRITER AND ATTORNEY PREFER TO REMAIN ANONYMOUS.

I reached out to another
who had pretended
he wanted to be close.
Instead of returning
the love I offered him,
He handcuffed me
and took me to a cage,
A place that must cause God
to cry mostly for those outside
who strut their officious freedom and poke their jeers and anger through the bars.
I was stripped and searched
But they found nothing
except that which I had
hoped to give—
just me.

I reached out to another
This man took my hand
and held me up
where I could see that
I was fine.
He didn't scorn
my need for love.
I'll bet God
must grin from ear to ear.
watching this man hand out
hope and love and dignity.
Just like they were something
everyone should have.
Even me.

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The Los Angeles Gay Community Services Center, one of the most famous and most successful gay centers in the world, serves tens of thousands of gay people every year.

Services include a V.D. clinic which gives more than 200,000 *free* tests and treatments each year. There is a 24 hour information and emergency "helpline," and a wide range of awareness, growth, and self-understanding groups as well as individual counseling.

The Center Employment Office offers free job placement for all types of work.

The Center operates a particularly praiseworthy alcoholism programs for men and women. The Van Ness Recovery House is an impressive, pleasant, well run, effective, recovery house project open to any gay person who wants to deal with a drug or alcohol dependency.

The Prison, Parole, and Probation program provides services for the gay ex-offender, parolee, or probationer.

In 1974 the federal government approved funding for the clinic and alcoholism programs amounting to more than a million dollars. The Center depends upon donations and volunteer help to maintain it's nonfunded programs. It is currently engaged in a "survival" fund raising drive.

Robert Sirico, an ordained M.C.C. minister, was chosen in the summer of 1975 to fill the position of Executive Director at a time when strong administrative qualities were much needed.

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DIGNITY

DIGNITY HOLDS NATIONAL MEETING IN BOSTON

(Dignity, the National organization providing a special ministry to gay people within the Roman Catholic Church, held its second biennial national convention in Boston last month. Rev. Roy Birchard, Coordinator of the MCC Liaison Office in Washington, D.C., was there representing the Board of Elders and the Fellowship. This is his report.)

DIGNITY CONVENTION

by Roy Birchard
Special to *In Unity*.

THREE hundred and fifty gay Catholics from 40 cities, their supporters and friends met at the Parker House in Boston over Labor Day weekend this year for the Second National Convention of Dignity. The three day gathering featured workshops similar to those at an MCC General Conference, major addresses, services of worship and delegate sessions. On Saturday evening, August 30, the convention moved to the Andover Christian Formation Center, a retreat and church conference center operated by the Franciscan Friars, where a mass concelebrated by more than 30 priests was attended by nearly 500 people. An address by Representative Elaine Noble followed. I was present throughout the weekend as UFMCC's observer.

An important development was the presence of a number of women Dignity members and the final major address given by Sr. Jeannine Gramick, chaplain of Dignity Baltimore, which dealt with a historical presentation on women in the Catholic Church, present organizing prospects, and suggestions about how to attract more women to Dignity by modifiying sexist language and behavior. Sr. Jeannine said she thought the time was approaching when the Roman Catholic Church — like the Episcopal Church — would see the ordination of women to the priesthood.

Other major addresses to the full gathering were by Fr. Thomas Oddo, national chaplain, who welcomed members the first evening, by Michael Valente, Ph.D., a professor of theology at Seton Hall University, and by John E. Boswell, a recent Ph.D. graduate of Harvard University, now teaching Medieval History at Yale, who lectured on references to homosexuality in the early Church and church Fathers, questioning the assumption that the Church has always denigrated gay lifestyles. Boswell combined great humor, charm and learning to captivate his audience with tidbits from a book to be published next year. He has lectured extensively in the Boston area, including MCC Boston.

For me, personally, one of the high points of the weekend was attendance at two social action workshops conducted by Brian McNaught, founding president of Dignity Detroit and former columnist for the archdiocesan newspaper there whose column was terminated when his identity as Dignity leader was made known. McNaught conducted a well-publicized fast last winter, drawing national attention to the actions of the archdiocese. (MCC readers may be interested in his article, "The Sad Dilemma of the Gay Catholic," in the August issue of *U.S. Catholic*.) Although he is the head of Dignity's social action, it will be as the organizer of Catholics for Gay Rights that he will be challenging the U.S. Catholic bishops this November.

On Sunday, November 16, during the annual meeting of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington, D.C., Catholics for Gay Rights will sponsor a day of Prayer and fasting calling attention to the Holy Year 1975, whose theme is Reconciliation and underlining the need for reconciliation between the Church and the gay community.

McNaught has asked for support from other gay religious ministries, and MCCers will be there, along with members of the Episcopal group, Integrity, and members of the Presbyterian and United Church of Christ gay caucuses. At a time when members of the Catholic hierarchy are still successful as the leading opponents of gay civil rights legislation, our prayers and cooperation are needed on behalf of our friends and fellow-Christians in Dignity.

WHAT'S AHEAD FOR DIGNITY

by Paul Diederich
National President, Dignity

(Delegates to the Second National Convention of DIGNITY elected three directors to two-year terms: PAUL DIEDERICH, National President, is a 29 year old banker. This is his second term as DIGNITY'S National leader. He is founder and past president of dignity/Boston. He has been lecturing extensively on homosexuality around the country.

FATHER THOMAS ODDO, CSC, National Secretary, is a Holy Cross priest completing his Ph.D. in theology at Harvard University. He teaches religious studies at Stonehill College, and has been ministering to the Boaston Gay Community for three years. PATRICK KEEFE, National Treasurer, is current president of Dignity/Boston. He is an employee of a public utility company.)

[The following is excerpted from Paul Diederich's letter in the Dignity National Newsletter, September 1975.)

DIGNITY has entered into dialogue with numerous church leaders, as well as with community leaders in many cities and states. Just last June the National Office presented our concerns directly to

the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Currently DIGNITY is presenting its concerns across the country at various hearings of the Bicentennial committee of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. There are two striking things here. One is that we are being heard. The other is that we are being listened to...We, as an organization within the church, are being given serious consideration by many of our Bishops and Pastors. The reason for this lies in the work which all of us have done to develop a firm and cohesive position within the church ...We present a united front, people from all areas of the country, of the world...

With one united voice we are saying, in many different ways, to our church and our society, that gay people have been oppressed far too long, and it has to stop. We are, by our teaching, by our personal example, helping to educate people everywhere...Many of us have found true liberation within ourselves and share this with our brothers and sisters who have yet to find it. DIGNITY is meeting many needs in many more people than we realize...

AN OPEN LETTER

by Jake Campbell

(Excerpted from the October 1975 Dignity National Newsletter.)

I am writing to try to express the increasing tension I feel concerning the gay movement and our flimsy acceptance by society.

The tension was increased when I read the fairly negative presentation in the September 8 TIME magazine

Press coverage basically has dealt with the "outrageous," the symbol rather than the substance, the accidents as opposed to the reality. There was no mention of LOVE, of the qualities found among gay lovers, among authentic gay friends.

In articles telling "how it is," we find over half devoted to fashion and fads. Most of the gays I know don't dress strangely enough to make *Time* or even *Psychology Today*.

All the press coverage has been missing the essential difference: men caring for men; women caring for women. That which is "gay" cannot seen, photographed, or touched. It is a quality and a certain type of human relationship, not an object or a sign, like a keychain or bandana.

So, in this state of tension, I wonder what I can do or say to help gays obtain some acceptance. Obviously, first I must refine my life-style to make it worthy of being a model. My lover and I are striving to be exemplars of gay love...

I can do my part to tear down stereotypes and myths that hold no truth or value. Slang expressions are to be removed from my speech and writings. Our language determines how others perceive us. To make it clear that we are deadly serious in our drive for respect, we must be seen to be more in control of what we say.

I like to write. I can make my contribution to a much-needed readable gay literature. I could identify with *The Front Runner*. We need a reservoir of images, archtypes, and characters celebrating our strengths. Let us create a literature from which we can draw strength of purpose, maintain our ideals, celebrate our God,..We are already real. Could we not begin to celebrate our lives through art, not pornography, but art?

If the articles you read in TIME and elsewhere are leaving you a little dry, write one yourself...

DIGNITY-MCC RETREAT TOGETHER

"A retreat hosted by the Sun Coast Dignity chapter in Tampa was conducted by the Dignity National Secretary (Father Tom Oddo) and the National President and attended by twenty people, with ministers and members of MCC. There was the usual conferences, night prayer, and Eucharists." (From *Dignity National Newsletter,* September, 1975.)

DIGNITY AIDS MCC BUILDING FUND

"In support of our sisters and brothers in the MCC in Kansas City, the Dignity chapter voted to contribute three of their collections to the church building fund. The chapter heard a report on the recent Integrity convention held in Chicago, and attended by a chapter member. Members attend from all over the midwest area." (From Dignity National Newsletter, September, 1975.)

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Congratulations on your appointment as new Editor of *IN UNITY*. We send along our best wishes and words of encouragement, and we look forward to working with you as closely as possible.

We have added you to our Newsletter mailing list so that you will receive a copy there at the Executive Offices. We also look forward to receiving *IN UNITY*.

We will look forward to continuing cooperation, and we offer to be helpful in any way we can. Give our best regards to all.

Our prayers and best wishes, sincerely in Christ, our Liberator.

Father Tom Oddo, csc
National Secretary
Dignity

Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches

THE CELLMATE

Volume II, Number 5

November, 1975

REV. GILBERT ATTENDS BOSTON CONFERENCE

Rev. Joseph H. Gilbert

(Rev. Gilbert, Pastor of MCC Providence, R.I., Director of the Universal Fellowship National Prison Ministry, 1972-1974, represented the Board of Prison Ministry (USA) at this Conference and submitted the following report.)

A report on the proceedings of the First National Conference on Alternatives to Incarceration, sponsored by The National Task Force on Higher Education and Criminal Justice of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

For me, Ms. Jessica Mitford brought things into perspective the very first night when, pointing to Commissioners of Correction from several different states, she said, "This is the best of a *bad* lot."

There were about 1300 persons at the conference...approximately 400 of them were former prisoners, and yet former prisoners had little meaningful input into the planning of the conference and little visible impact on the conference itself.

The same would have been true of gay people if we had not taken charge of our own destinies. No session had been planned on homosexuality in prison. David Rothenberg from the Fortune Society approached the planners, asked about doing one, and was told that was not possible...the subject was too threatening. So he said, "How about one on sexuality in prison?" That was all right. But the *word* was not to be used. Then the workshop was scheduled into a room that would comfortably handle 20 people. Fortunately, there was a sliding wall between that room and the next. The group scheduled to use the other room did not show up. The wall was opened and over a hundred people came to share with David; Representative Elaine Noble; Fran O'Leary, an ex-prisoner from New York; Jonathan Smith-Cousins who is an exprisoner and who works as a Special Assistant to a Pennsylvania Legislator; and this writer. There was sensitizing and I believe that those who attended the workshop will be more attentive to gay needs in the agencies they represented.

This conference may, in fact, have been where we must start in seeking alternatives to incarceration. I learned a few things. I learned that beginning in 1870 the practice has been to give more and more sentences for more and more things. I do not think this conference addressed alternatives. I learned that the South Carolina system is now at 147%of its capacity. I do not think this conference addressed alternatives. I learned that a member of the New York State Parole Board defines his job in terms of perceived sin. That tells me he responds to his own sense of distaste. I do not think this conference addressed alternatives.

Someone at the conference said: "It is hard to criticize yourself, even if you are just the gatekeeper." I believe there were too many gatekeepers involved in the planning, execution and presentation of this conference. The ease with which the work and care and concern of ex-prisoners and volunteers was pre-empted and co-opted tells me that WE in MCC must beware that that does not happen to US.

Now that we have won our case in California we will have the opportunity to get more and more involved in more and more institutions, once they understand that we ARE coming in, will attempt to turn us into one more management tool in the operation of their prisons and jails. The thing that I learned from this conference is how easy that process is. We must resist that.

We are present, where we are present, to show forth Christ to Prisoners and ex-Prisoners with whom we come into contact. We are there to tell the Good News, that even law-breakers are fit for redemption. We are there to teach that loving God with all your heart, and mind and strength also means getting in touch with yourself...that loving neighbor as self makes the individual the standard of loveability. We will be teaching that in institutions which are teaching something very different to our gay brothers and sisters. If that brings us into tension with the institution we must accept the tension and not opt for being part of the system.

Prisoners do not go to prison FOR punishment, but AS punishment. The conference produced very few new ideas. Sunday morning Jessica Mitford said that "some of the alternatives discussed here sound marvelous, but if you explore the history of prison reform, you will find that they are the same old adages...The last four (American) presidents have deplored prisons as schools of crime, but that has had very little impact on the treatment of inmates throughout America."

That same morning spokespersons for ex-prisoners and current inmates (there were several on furlough from Massachusetts prisons) denounced organizers of the conference for not including the inmates and ex-inmates in the planning for the conference. The statement included a list of demands. As a result of our presence one of those demands is: "That no service or alternative to incarceration should be denied to a prisoner or ex-prisoner because of sexual or affectional preference." Considering how macho some of the prisoner groups are, I felt that was progess.

There are other conferences coming up...dealing with gay people in the federal system, dealing with Strategy and Action on Criminal Justice. I look forward to letting you know about these.

TESTIMONY FROM NEBRASKA

The following letter from the pastor of MCC Omaha was not written for publication, but it is the type of thing that THE CELLMATE *takes great joy in sharing with its readers in sixty-some prisons in nearly every state in the United States:*

"Enclosed is a letter from one of our prisoners at the prison in _____. Also enclosed is a letter that he wrote to us when he was first imprisoned. I'm sure you will notice the marked difference in his thinking and the way he relates to our Lord. I think this is a good testimony to the good our Prison Ministry can do in working with prisoners...In His name, Rev. Bob Arhtur, Pastor."

"May 20, 1975. This has been so much rinky-dink from the beginning. I feel like an animal here. I need help. Hope something happens soon. I'm in pretty good spirits because God will work through you all, I just know it."

"September 22, 1975. (*Excerpted from a four page, single spaced letter*) How pleasant and wonderful to have you up Bob, I've done a lot of growing up. It's taken some severe blows, but no more do I need through God's grace and understanding strength we are unbeatable ...I have lots to learn, but at least I have already started and as long as I live, by God's grace, I continue learning as each day passes. When I get back to Omaha, I will work with you and with God for all my brothers and sisters...I know God wants me to be His instrument to bring His children home...This to me is a testimony. Hope it might help others. Feel free to show this letter to anyone you want. Love in Christ, Dave."

The Cellmate has also learned:

1. That Dave is expecting to parole in November and Rev. Arthur and Jeff from his congregation have arranged for housing and employment for him.
2. That Brian is working on an appeal, so Rev. Arthur arranged to put him in touch with a public defender.
3. That Joe is interested in Bible study and always full of questions about that.
4. That George is expecting to parole to Denver, so Rev. Arthur contacted MCC Denver in his behalf.
5. That Rev. Arthur is setting up a group of people in his congregation to provide pen-pals and parole sponsors.

A spokesperson for the Board of Prison Ministry indicated that the Board is "pleased and gratified by the professional and effective ministry of Rev. Arthur in behalf of a considerable number of persons in prison and his wise handling of several crucial situations."

Photo by Judy McDonald

At the Conference on Alternatives to Incarceration. (l-r) Rev. Joseph Gilbert of MCC Providence, Rep. Elaine Noble, David Rothenberg, Fran O'Leary, Jonathan Smith Cousins.

AREA REPRESENTATIVES

The following Area Representatives of the Board of Prison Ministry (USA) may be contacted for pen pals, parole planning in their area, post release assistance, and questions pertaining to MCC ministry from that area of the United States.

- *Rev. Heather Anderson,* 744 Main Street #5, Worcester, Mas 01610
- *Rev. Bob Arthur,* P.O.B. 14407, Omaha, Nb 68114
- *Steve Childers,* 3834 Ross Ave., Dallas, Texas 75204
- *Courtney Craighead,* 1934 Burgundy, New Orleans, La 70117
- *Carl Doerschuk,* P.O.B. 563, Akron, Ohio 44309
- *Gordon Fisher,* 1046 South Hill Street, Los Angeles, CA 90015
- *Arthur Fleschner,* 2904 Concordia Avenue, Tampa, Fl 33609
- *Rev. Howard Gaas,* P.O.Box 1145, Baltimore, Md 21203
- *Rev. Joseph Gilbert,* 63 Chapin Avenue, Providence, R.I. 02909
- *Ivan Gregory,* 1726 H Street, Sacramento, Ca 95814
- *Sheldon Haight,* P.O.Box 12020, Seattle, Wn 98112
- *Carol Harris,* P.O.B. 291, Jacksonville, Fl 32201
- *Douglas Holt,* P.O.B. 4187 Tulsa, Ok 74104
- *Steve LaFever,* P.O.Box 187, Nashville, Ten 37202
- *James Lewey,* P.O.B. 3147, St. Louis, Mo 63130
- *Rev. Kenneth Martin,* P.O.B. 2392, Chicago, Ill 60690
- *Frank Murr,* P.O.B. 9536, Denver, Co 80209
- *Terry Napier,* P.O.B. 39235, Cincinnati, Ohio 45239
- *Rev. Jay Neely,* 201 W. 13th Street, New York, NY 10011
- *Bert Perkins,* 11717 Victory Blvd, North Hollywood, Ca 91606
- *Dan Richmond,* P.O.B. 8174 Philadelphia, Pa 19101
- *Cliff Turpin,* P.O.Box 7182, Pittsburgh, Pa 15213
- *Eric Randolph,* P.O.B. 5206, Kansas City, Mo 64112
- *Rev. Tere Roderick,* 1076 Guerrero Street, San Francisco, CA 94110

a pilgrimage of gay catholics

by Brian McNaught

"Is not this the sort of fast that pleases me—it is the Lord Yahweh who speaks—to break unjust fetters and undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free."
(*Isaiah 58:6*)

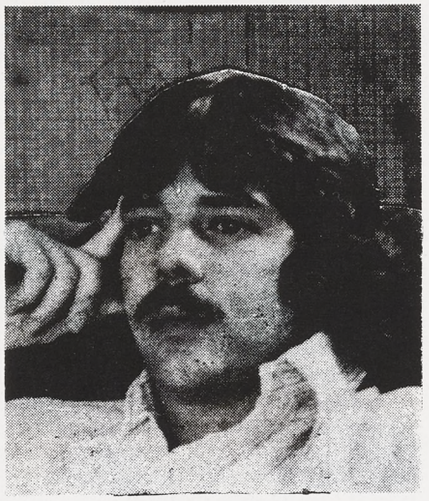
In the spirit of the Holy Year, November 16, 1975 has been declared a National Day of Reconciliation between Gay Catholics and their Church. Dignity, Catholics for Gay Rights and The Salvatorian Gay Ministry Task Force invite our brothers and sisters in the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches to join us in prayer, in a water fast and in our Pilgrimage to Washington D.C. for a concelebrated Mass of Reconciliation.

In the Roman Catholic tradition, the Holy Year is held every twenty-five years and is marked by religious pilgrimages to Rome. Pope Paul VI has declared the theme of the Holy Year beginning in 1975 to be that of reconciliation.

From November 15th to the 21st the Roman Catholic Biships of the United States will be meeting in the Statler Hilton Hotel in Washington D.C. Our fast, pilgrimage, and Mass of Reconciliation are being sponsored to coincide with the bishops' meeting, for it is our feeling that there is no group in this country less reconciled with their Church than the gay Catholic community.

The Roman Bishops are being personally invited to join us in our fast, our prayers and our Mass of Reconciliation, to be held at 2 p.m. in the Marvin Center of George Washington University. Afterwards, the bishops will be asked to share in a glass of water, introductions and exchange of views in our hospitality suite in the Statler Hilton.

Brothers and sisters unable to join us in Washington are encouraged to fast on November 16 in prayerful solidarity. Dignity chapters across



Advocate Photo

the country will be sponsoring local Masses of Reconciliation for those persons unable to make the pilgrimage.

At one point after the Liturgy, representatives of the three sponsoring groups will present to a representative of the bishops a petition signed by friends across the country pledging to support a fight against discrimination.

The actual statement on the petition is taken from a letter sent to me by Detroit bishops Thomas Gumbleton and Joseph Imesch to end my 24-day fast of atonement for the sins committed against gay brothers and sisters. "...we have a serious obligation to root out structures and attitudes which discriminate against the homosexual as a person. We will exert our leadership in behalf of this effort."

Friends in the Metropolitan Community Church are asked to take the above statement and have it signed by as many community notables as possible. Currently our list includes the signatures of the Episcopal Bishops of the Dioceses of New York and Michigan. Signed petitions should be sent to me by November 12 to: 2044 Clairmount, Detroit, MI 48206.

Catholics for Gay Rights is an ad hoc committee of priests, religious and laity who are working together to ensure that civil rights remains an issue before the American bishops. Serving on the advisory board are a number of persons who have distinguished themselves as selfless leaders in the gay struggle, including the Rev. Troy Perry.

Dignity is an international organization of gay Catholics which now has chapters in over 45 cities. The national office is located in Boston.

The Salvatorian Gay Ministry Task Force is a group within the Justice and Peace Commission of the Order of the Divine Savior, a Roman Catholic religious order of priests and brothers. The Salvatorians, as the order is commonly known, have committed themselves to a ministry to the nation's gay community and have opened their doors to ordain gay men to the priesthood or religious life...a practice unprecedented in the Church in this country.

Serving as liaison to our efforts in Social Action is the Rev. Roy Birchard for the UFMCC. Roy represented UFMCC at the annual convention of Dignity in Boston over Labor Day. Currently in Washington D.C.,Roy is maintaining close ties with us as he prepares for "Affirmation '76", world wide rally climaxing the UFMCC annual General Conference to be held in Washington D.C. next August.

It is our hope that by working closely with Troy Perry and Roy Birchard in their tremendous ministries and by soliciting the help of our brothers in the Universal Fellowship of the Metropolitan Community Churches, together we might make this world a more sanctified place to grow gayly in the Lord.

"If you do away with the yoke, the clenched fist, the wicked word, if you give your bread to the hungry, and relief to the oppressed, your light will rise in the darkness, and your shadows become like noon." (*Isaiah 58:10*)

GOODBYE ED

"Goodbye Ed" was the theme of a peaceful demonstration of the Los Angeles Gay Community on Friday evening, October 10.

Police Chief Ed Davis of L.A., one of the most vocal homophobes in the world, had brought his hysterical ravings to a crescendo in recent weeks following the ruling of the Civil Service Commission that persons of homosexual orientation could not be barred from serving as policemen because of their affectional perference.

The Chief made emphatic public statements to the effect that homosexuals simply couldn't serve in the police department, at least not *his*.

1. What if they had to search somebody? Or take a shower at the police station? Or serve on the vice squad?
2. The other policemen would be completely demoralized and rufuse to serve with *them*: ride in the same cruiser? Alone?
3. The danger of contagion on the police force would be great. Who knows what diseases homosexual policemen would pick up from sex in alleys, gutters, and public toilets?
4. Heterosexual policemen would be in danger of catching all manner of diseases. What if they had to use the same microphone?

With this background of homophobia, the gay community decided that action was past due. Several hundred members and friends of the gay community assembled at Hollywood High School. They were addressed by Rev. Troy Perry, Morris Kight, and Bob Sirico. Then these three well-known leaders of the L.A. gay community, walking arm in arm, led some 600 marchers along Highland, Hollywood Boulevard, Vine, Sunset, and Wilcox to the Hollywood Police Station.

There was extensive radio and TV coverage. Some stations carried live broadcasts. KFWB and KMPC radio cars accompanied the entire route of the march. One observer remarked, "I wonder what the police would be up to if these media people were not here to witness?"

Needless to say, the mood became more serious as the marchers approached the precinct house. Hundreds of marchers had brought candles which were lit as they approached the station on Wilcox. Talking ceased. The serious matter of the silent protest was at hand.

It was disquieting to some to note that not only were most of the precinct squad cars pulled off the street patrol and parked near the precinct house, but that nearby rooftops were "manned"by persons in uniform caring weapons, and it was reported that not all were hand guns.

The mood of the protest is summed up in the broadcast description by a KMPC newsperson: "This was the quietest, best behaved, most peaceful protest I have witnessed in twenty years as a newsman."

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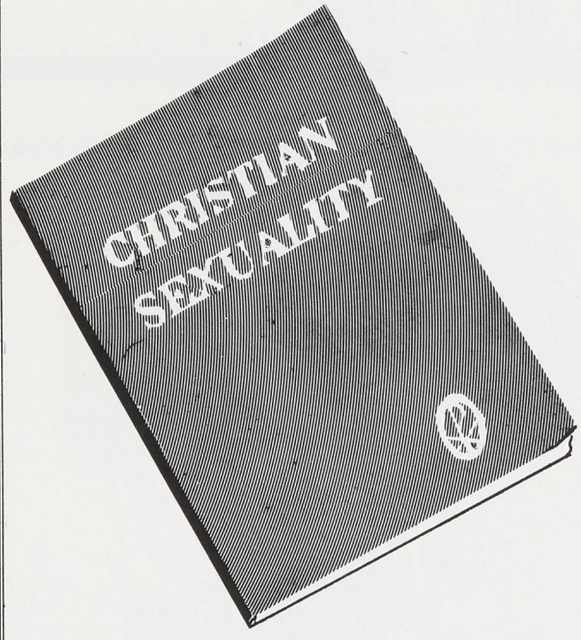

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ECUMENICAL SOCIAL SERVICE IN CHICAGO

"What's going on in Chicago today?" This is a question asked almost 2500 times daily by callers to Gay News and Events, one of the many services offered to the gay community in Chicago by *Free Spirit Fellowship,* a non-profit, ecumenical social service agency founded by Patrick Townson in 1972.

Townson began editing *Chicago Gay Listings,* a quarterly directory in early 1971. "But it soon became apparent that some more reliable, and less time-consuming process had to be found to bring up-to-date news to the gay community."

The *Gay News and Events* turned out to be the most practical way and went on the air November 1, 1973. Originally operating on one line with a two minute recorded message which changed daily, the service has expanded to a three and a half minute message, operating on eight telephone lines.

As the word about the new service spread, the daily call volume gradually grew from three hundred per day to the present 2500 this past year.

The service offers a variety of items for the listeners, including some national gay news, along with local news of gay groups. The message is commercially sponsored by various businesses in the city, and changes daily. The message may be heard by calling (312) 427)1234.

Most people would rest on their laurels at that point, and sit back to enjoy being heard by 2500 people everyday. But Townson still had ideas about *written* communications, and continued to work on improvements to the directory he had begun two years before.

In early 1975, the Board of Directors of *Free Spirit Fellowship* reached a monumental decision concerning the fate of the five year old gay directory. The cost of printing the guide had gone up considerably, and finally, with some thoughtful consideration, the decision was reached to work closely with other guides instead of trying to duplicate efforts."

Frances Green has been editing the *Gayellow Pages,* a national guide from New York for more than two years. "She has the diligence, and time to type and print the directory, which is something we didn't have," said Townson, "and at the same time, we had the working knowledge of Chicago which she lacked." So by an agreement between Townson and Green, the Chicago/midwestern section of *Gayellow Pages* came under the direction of Townson and *Free Spirit Fellowship* beginning with issue 5 of that guide.

An underlying rule at FSF has been the need for cooperation between gay organizations. Consequently, the organization has always emphasized what the others are doing, rather than working in an opposite direction.

Being a service-oriented organization rather than a politically-oriented one has its problems, as many leaders in the gay movement will attest. The political gays have always been more vocal, and frequently attract more attention from the press, and more contributors in a position to help financially.

"Some gay leaders in our city have been furious with me," remarked Townson, "because FSF has refused to align itself with the Socialist Party, the Communist Party, the Women's movement, or the Farm Workers, for example. These are all movements worthy of consideration, but, let's face it, most gays are *not* into politics. Most of us lead quiet lives, vote according to our own convictions, entertain ourselves and work at jobs just like straight people do. Our first job, is to inform the gay public about their own community. Nothing more."

This attitude brought election as Chairperson of Gay Pride Week (Chicago's version of the Stonewall rememberance) to Townson for the 1975 festivities. The past year's festivities were more successful than ever, as the businesses and organizations of Chicago worked together under Townson's direction. Good Shepherd Parish, MCC, Chicago, sponsored a film festival for GP Week which attracted a huge crowd to see several classic gay documentary films. The people from the Rogers Park Gay Center coordinated the annual dance at the fashionable Drake Hotel. It too, was a success, as over a thousand gay people celebrated being gay. The annual parade and post-parade rally featured Mark Segal as guest speaker.

FSF is now operating a 24 hour daily referral service, with callers being referred to one of several organizations around the city and elsewhere. Most of the fifty calls daily come from people who are familiar with the recorded message, and need more specific information. FSF routinely refers prisoners, for example, to the Prison Ministry program of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches.

FSF also sponsors a quarterly ecumenical worship service, uniting the religious groups in Chicago, including Dignity and MCC for worship. Most of the services feature well-known speakers, such as Tom Maurer, gay activist and former Chicago resident, and Rabbi Arnold Kaiman, active in the founding of the gay temple in Los Angeles. In August, 1975, FSF presented the well-known Dr. Norman Pittenger, general conference speaker at a special service at MCC, in cooperation with Dignity and Integrity, the Episcopal organization.

FSF also recently assisted Air Force Sgt. Leonard P. Matlovich with a fund raising program in Chicago which included two benefits, and a radio talk show.

Townson closed our interview by mentioning a new publication of the Fellowship, *Gay Newsclips,* a monthly composite of news clippings of interest to gays from over 250 daily national newspapers, and better than one thousand weekly newspapers coast to coast. The news publication is scheduled to begin in January, 1976.

"My life is full and rich, and I am happy with my work," said Townson, "what more can a person expect from life?"

Ministers of the Southwest District Conference held a retreat in October at Mount Calvary Retreat House at Santa Barbara, California. Father John and Brother William of the (Episcopal) Order of the Holy Cross presented the subject matter and directed the discussions. The Rev. Donald Pederson, District Coordinator, arranged and coordinated the Retreat.

SAMARITAN BIBLE SCHOOL BEGINS FALL TERM

The Rev. Jeffrey Pulling, Registrar, of the Sanaritan Bible School, announced that forty-three (43) students have enrolled in the school this quarter.

The school is beginning to operate under upgraded entrance requirements approved by the General Conference," said Rev. Donald Pederson, Dean of the school.

Courses currently offered by the night school this quarter are:

- Church Organization & Structure - Rev. James Sandmire
- Romans - Rev. Donald Pederson
- Introduction to Theology - Rev. Richard Mickley

The trustees of the school are; John Gill — President, Rev. Donald Pederson, Karen Wheeler — Secretary, Rev. Richard Ploen — Treasurer, Rev. Richard Vincent, and Rev. James Sandmire.

In Unity salutes *Entertainment West* (Jim Keper, Editor) for its thorough, balanced, well written coverage of the General Conference, and the *Advocate* (Rob Shivers, writer) for its objective article on the conference.

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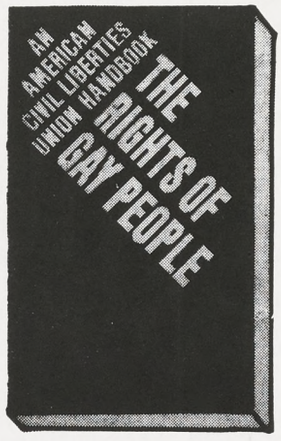

The Gay Community Services Center offers you a FREE copy of the ACLU's new book, "THE RIGHTS OF GAY PEOPLE," for your tax-deductible contribution of $10.00 or more.

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- 24-Hour Helpline
- Growth Groups
- Prison, Probation and Parole and Re-Entry House*
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- Legal Counseling
- Sunday Calendar [Art Shows, Exhibitions, etc.]
- Gender Identity Counseling [Transvestite, Transexual]

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INTEGRITY From Pg.5

in the imagery of Exodus." I assess our most urgent need as Gay people to be the need to love one another. Unquestionably we will require the Grace of God, but until we shed our own homophobia learned in the "parlors of Pharaoh' and welcome instead rich Gay catholicity, Gay diversity, I see Gay people 'trapped in Egypt' forever."

So there is much consciousness-raising to do among ourselves and in the Church general. There are people to minister to, causes to work for, laws to lobby for and—above all—Love to manifest to all people everywhere.

Fortunately for Gay People—and for all people—salvation comes not through Moses or Paul—nor through the Holy Bible nor the Episcopal Church—nor through any person (however powerful), nor any thing (however desirable) on earth. Salvation lies in Jesus Christ and Him alone, that Blessed Living Lord who eternally promises that "the person who comes to me I will never turn away"(John 6:37). If we believe that promise, and are very clear on who we are and to Whom we belong and what He commands us to go and do, we can then look with some confidence at the advice (in very free translation) which Gamaliel once gave to the Sanhedrin (Acts 5:33-39). "Don't mess around with these people. If they are not of God, they will disappear. But if the *are* of God, nothing you can do will stop them."

FELLOWSHIP From Pg.10

installed as pastor. The ceremony was presented over the local television station.

The Omaha Church is currently worshipping in homes since the Unitarian Church declined to renew their contract and they have not been able to find another church willing to share their church home.

Rev. Ron Burcham, pastor of MCC Kansas City, is now well on the way to recovery following his hospitalization and recuperation from back surgery.

There are three new study groups in the Mid Central District. Witchita, Kansas: Jerry Sloan, Worship Coordinator; Joplin, Missouri: Ray Willard, Worship Coordonator; Illiama, Iowa: Reid Christienson; Worship Coordinator.

The District Conference discussed a variety of church business, including: 1. Congregational organizational matters, committees social service, remembrances, etc. 2. Pastoral salaries, allowances, and benefits. 3. Fund raising ideas. 4. Telephone answering service. 5. Training of ministers and candidates. 6. Orientation of new members and presenting them with materials about the work of the church. 7. Scripture study.

PITTENGER FOLLOWS CONFERENCE WITH CHICAGO VISIT

W. Norman Pittenger, famed British theologian and guest at the General Conference this year generated much excitement in the Chicago gay community by his appearance to preach at Good Shepherd Parish, MCC, Chicago on August 10.

Dr. Pittenger was in Chicago to participate in the first annual convention sponsored by Integrity, the national Episcopal forum. He was contacted prior to General Conference by a committee of gay leaders in Chicago, and requested to speak to a general audience following the Integrity events early that month.

Patrick Townson, chairperson of the ecumenical committee sponsoring Dr. Pittenger's sermon, was quoted as saying the Good Shepherd Parish seemed the most logical and convenient place to hold a joint service of worship for the several gay religious organizations in the city.

Typical attendance at Good Shepherd Parish is less than two hundred for Sunday evening worship, however the night of August 10 saw a crowd of almost five hundred worshippers from Dignity. MCC, Integrity, and other smaller groups gathered together for worship in the main sanctuary at Wellington Avenue Church.

Following a special organ recital for the occasion, and introductory portions of the service, Dr. Pittenger preached an eloquent twenty minute sermon on the topic, "Love is the Clue; To God and To Man."

Following the sermon, Pittenger received a standing ovation from the audience, lasting almost two minutes. His sermon was transcribed, and is available from Good Shepherd Church Offices, Suite 1704, 343 South Dearborn Street in Chicago, IL 60604.

The ecumenical worship committee regularly (four times per year) presents special speakers in joint services of worship in Chicago area gay congregations. The usual dates for the services are during Gay Pride Week, and Thanksgiving Week, plus two other occasions selected by the committee.

FATHER OF ELDER HOSE PASSES AWAY

Henry F. Hose, father of "Papa John," passed away September 11, 1975 in his home city, Massillon, Ohio. He was 84, a retired employee of the Ohio Edison Company. He and Mrs. Hose had observed their 50th wedding anniversary in 1962. Papa John's mother, Augusta, died November 29, 1970.

Rev. Hose, who has been an Elder of the Universal Fellowship from the beginning, is pastor of MCC Tampa, Florida. He previously served as Pastor of MCC San Diego and was first assistant pastor of MCC Los Angeles.

IN UNITY was represented at the funeral of Mr. Hose by the Editor's mother, Mrs. Clara Mickley of Louisville, Ohio.

Congratulations to Pastor James Morgan and Anchorage MCC for their feature article in the *Advocate*, October 22, 1975 entitled "Alaska Church Built By Determination."

We read in the same *Advocate* about MCC Seattle being accepted into the Church Council of Greater Seattle.

IN UNITY apologizes to the Rev. Virgil F. Scott for inadvertently omitting his name from the list of newly Licensed Ministers in the October issue. Rev. Scott is pastor of MCC Ventura, California.

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CONTRIBUTORS WANTED FOR NEW GAY PRAYER BOOK

Gay Christians in all denominations are being called upon to contribute material for inclusion in a proposed book of prayers for the use of Gay Christians and their friends. The book, which will be sponsored by INTEGRITY, will include liturgies, poems, readings, as well as private prayers collects, and litanies. There is already much of this material in print, which will be edited for inclusion in the anthology, but new material is being encouraged for first publication. Contributions or suggestions can be sent to the Rev. Grant M. Gallup, 1619 W. Warren Boulevard, Chicago 60612, who is a member of INTEGRITY and of the Bishop's Advisory Commission on Liturgical Affairs for the Diocese of Chicago.

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lovely waiters pour drinks
all over you!

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and dance-dance-dancing
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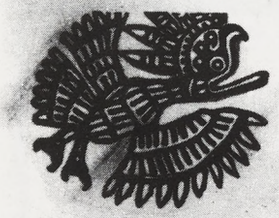
The nights are decadent!



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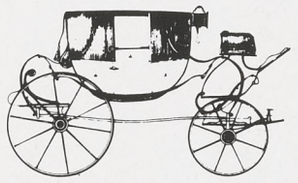
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT KKHI ST. FRANCIS HOTEL (415) 986-2156



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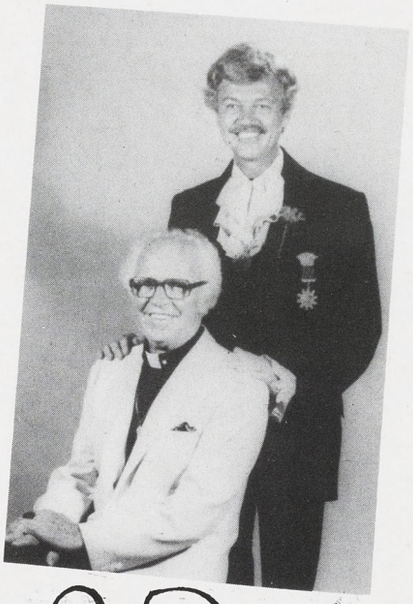

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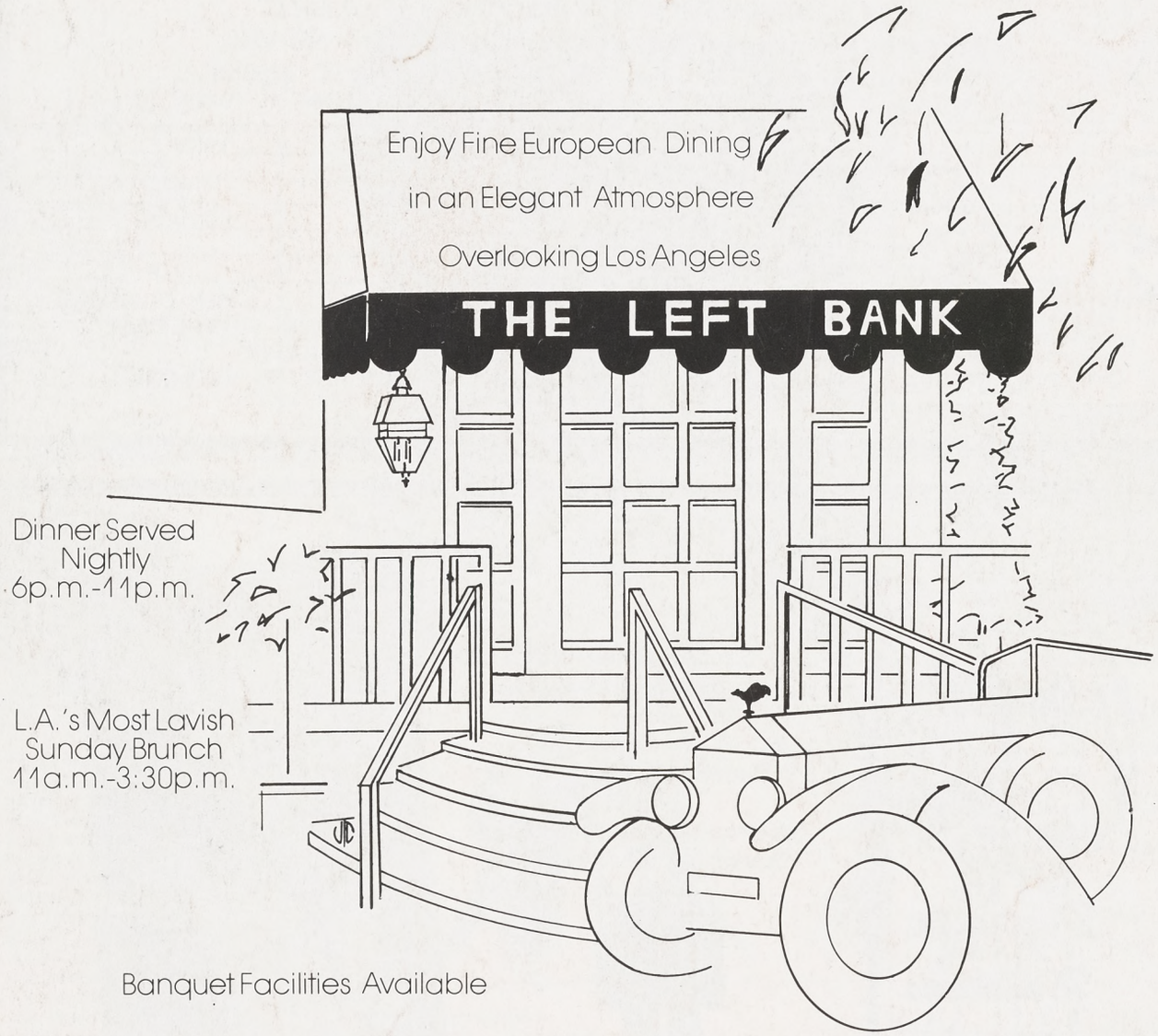

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